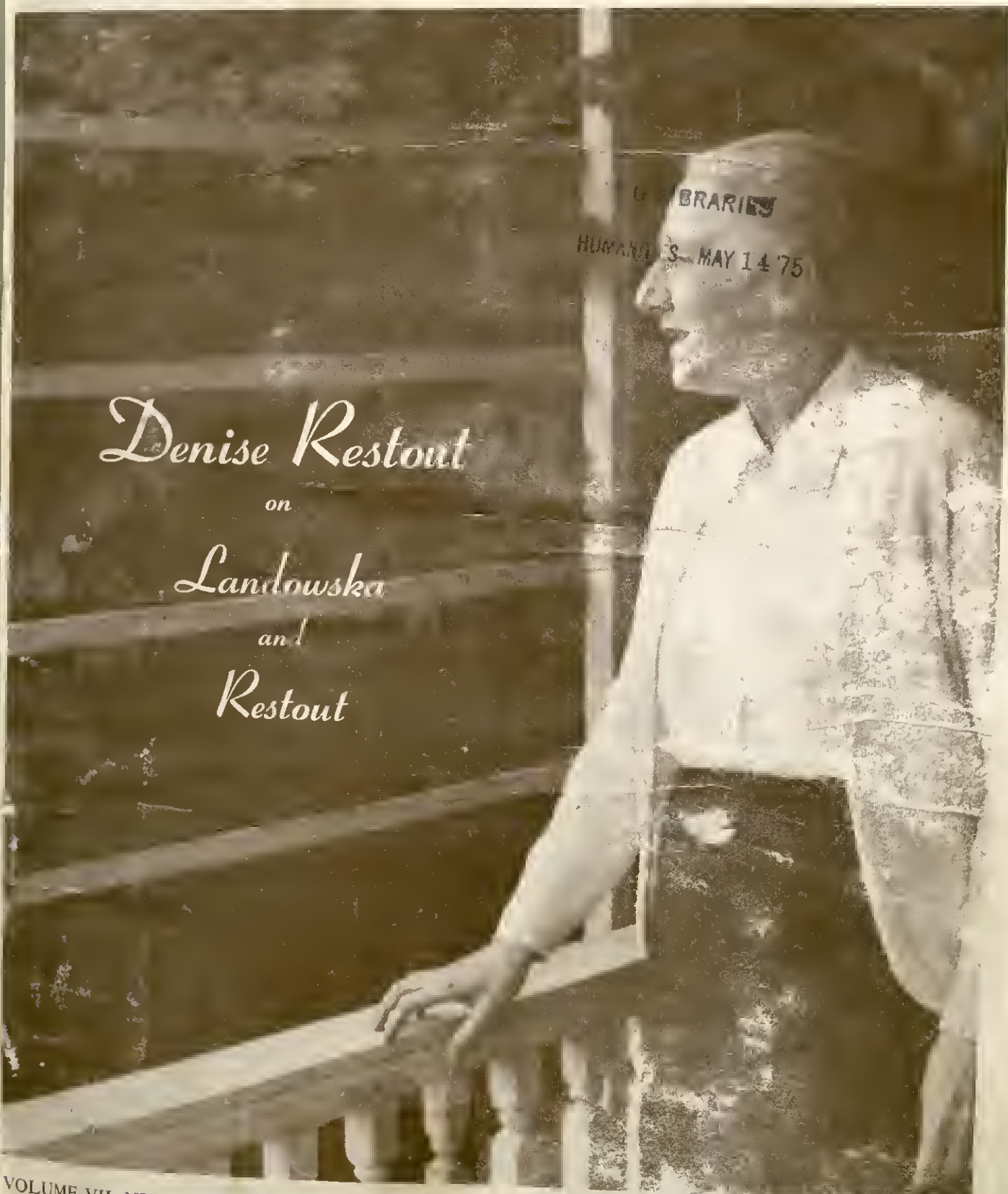


The HARPSIGORD



Denise Restout

on

Landowska

and

Restout

VOLUME VII, NUMBER 1

FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL, 1974

HARPSICHORD

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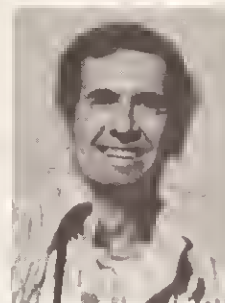
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GO FOR BAROQUE

by Hal Haney



A number of members have written wanting to know if we could publish news of harpsichord workshops and festivals early in the year so they could plan

vacation time accordingly. Unfortunately, festival planners quite often don't know until the last minute exactly what the program will be. By the time they notify us, we have already gone to press. This is not true of Frances Cole and Charles Schisler who are announcing the Westminster Choir College Harpsichord Festival Week with this issue. This is the American harpsichord festival and if you can only attend one festival, this is certainly the one to consider. The fee is \$140 and room and board is \$60 for a total of \$200. There are no extras and the \$60 includes all three meals each day. It is possible to live off campus in the town of Princeton, but one misses a lot of the atmosphere by doing so. Indeed, I can highly recommend this festival for anyone interested in harpsichords and harpsichord music. One need not know how to play an instrument in order to attend or enjoy the festival. For those who do play, Dr. Cole usually schedules a student recital which gives you an opportunity to play before other students in an informal setting. The last page of this issue gives all the necessary details.

I thought it might be interesting to locate the harpsichordist who is playing is enjoyed by the largest number of members. Since we are located in all parts of the world, this would really be an international voice recognizing superior talent among harpsichordists. Below is a partial list of harpsichordists who are playing to

day, or whose recordings are still available in the average music store. It is not complete and you can submit any additional name or any person you feel should receive recognition as your favorite harpsichordist for 1974. Putnam Aldrich; Isolde Algrimm; Ophira Aloufy; Lily Berger; E. Power Biggs; Patricia U. Bowman; Ed Brewer; Neely Bruce; Konrad Burr; Harold Chaney; Claude Jean Chiasson; Frances Cole; Robert Conant; Alan Curtis; Andrew De Masi; Huguette Dreyfus; Alice Ehlers; Robert Elliott; Helma Elsner; Martha Folts; Albert Fuller; Martin Galling; Ruggero Gerlin; Kenneth Gilbert; Martha Goldstein; Allen Green; Margery Halford; Malcolm Hamilton; Eijo Hashimoto; Christiane Jaccotet; Paul Jacobs; Lady Susi Jeans; Bengt Johnsson; Hilda Jonas; Robert Jones; Silvia Kind; Igor Kipnis; Ralph Kirkpatrick; Eberhard Kraus; Wanda Landowska; Hilde Landfort; Arthur Lawrence; Gustav Leonhardt; Judith Linder; George Malcolm; Sylvia Marlow; Shirley Mathews; Paul Maynard; Fritz Neumeyer; Anthony Newman; Frank Novak; Hugh O'Meagher; Doris Ornstein; Christiane Parez; Joseph Payne; Daniel Pinkham; Virginia Pleasants; David Plesnicar; Rafael Puyana; Gerald Ranck; Joyce Rawlings; Denise Restout; Jean-Charles Richard; Gertrud K. Roberts; Wm. Neil Roberts; Lionel Rogg; Marjorie Rohlfleisch; Hugo Ruf; Yvonne Schmit; Howard Schott; Janos Sebestyen; Luciano Sgrizzi; Millicent Silver; Donald Stagg; Barbara Strzelecka; Herbert Tachezi; Michael Thomas; Colin Tilney; David Tudor; Rosalyn Tureck; Ilse Urbuteit; Fernando Valenti; Robert Veyron-Lacroix; Antoinette Vischer; Helmut Walcha; Hermann Werdermann; Blanche Winogron; Victor Wolfram; Ross Wood.

Send in your vote by a note or postcard to reach the office on or before May 1, 1974. Each person who sends in a vote for a candidate will receive a detailed compilation of all votes received.

Volume VII, No. 1, February, March, April, 1974

New information on the

SKOKLOSTER

HARPSICHORD

By Bjarne B. Dahl

In 1971 I wrote an article for this journal which appeared in Volume IV, number 3, which described and illustrated an instrument known as the Skokloster Harpsichord, located in a baroque castle called Skokloster Slott.

Just recently I had a short but very informative visit with Dr. Vandemeer who is the curator of the music instrument section of the Germanisches National museum in Nuremberg. The article on the Skokloster instrument was of great interest to him since he has also found a very early version of the English Lute in a south German harpsichord built by Müller. Dr. Vandermeer published a treatise on this instrument in Italy under the title "Conservato a Roma il piu anteo clavicembalo tedesco", Edizioni Palatino, Roma 1967. Upon my return to California he wrote to me regarding his thoughts about the Skokloster harpsichord and the text of that letter is reproduced below for those students who wish to further their knowledge of this period of harpsichord building.

"Dear Mr. Dahl:

It was with the greatest interest that I read your article on the Skokloster harpsichord. For me there is no doubt that the instrument was built in Germany, probably in Northern- or Middle-Germany. To begin with, I know of no 17th century Flemish instrument with naturals covered with anything else but bone. Furthermore, in Flemish instruments the naturals B,C,E, and F are somewhat wider than the naturals D,G, and A, while in the instruments at Skokloster the D-keys are exceedingly wide, which

points to Germany rather than to Flanders.

The shape of the case also points to Germany, the rather inelegant form originating from a rather short measure of pitch C (about 12").

The lute-stop is also extremely improbable for a Flemish instrument, while exactly this stop is already found in the 1537 Müller-instrument in Rome. For these reasons I very strongly presume, that the Skokloster harpsichord is of German origin. The sound-board decoration does not contradict this as such a decoration is already known in a German virginal from 1587. It seems even probable that the sound-board decoration now considered typically Flemish was taken over by the Flemish from the Germans, whereby one must not forget that Karest, the maker of the oldest preserved spinet from the year 1548 came from Cologne. I completely agree that the instrument must originally have formed part of a claviorganum. This seems more probable than your supposition on page 14 of "The Harpsichord" under the lower photo, that the slot under the key levers may have been made to connect it to a pedal-board. Attached pedal-boards with a compass of about an octave were known in Italy already in the 16th century, but as far as we can see were completely unknown in Germany before the 18th century. However this may be, the instrument and your article on it are extremely interesting.

Yours sincerely

Dr. John H. Van Der Meer
Germanisches Nationalmuseum
Nurnberg, Germany"

HINTS

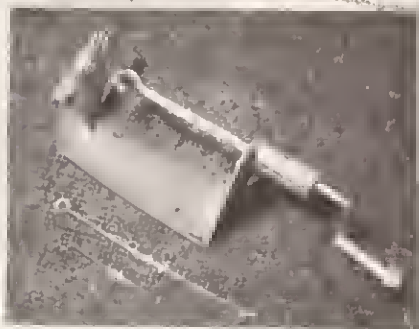
From the EXPERTS

INEXPENSIVE MACHINE MAKES STRING LOOPS EASY

Brian H. Berke of Southfield, Michigan has found the answer to perfect hitch pin loops for harpsichord strings. Here is his report:

"This past summer while I was putting together a clavichord kit I had my first experience at tying the hitch pin loop for the strings. The results were somewhat less than what I had hoped for. While looking in a Netercraft fishing catalogue, I came upon the Tack-L-Tool. It takes about 10 seconds to make a loop. The results are excellent. It is necessary to wind only about 4 loops around the shank so that the loop can tighten around the hitch pin. It works particularly well for strings larger than .013. With a little practice the smaller strings can also be looped. This gadget should prove valuable for the amateur builder who dreads tying all those loops."

We wrote to The Netercraft, 3101 Sylvania Avenue, Toledo, Ohio 43613, and purchased a Tack-L-Tool for



\$4.95 and it did, indeed, make loop making easy. (See photo) The smaller the string the more talent and practice is required, but it does make a perfect loop. Thinking that other members might be interested in this item, we wrote to Mr. H. T. Ludgate, President of Netercraft asking if he could give us

a special price if we bought in quantity. This saving could then be passed on to members. Mr. Ludgate replied: "We are the sole manufacturers of this tool and can take care of your needs in whatever quantity you might need. These tools are sold directly to our customers and we have but one price as per our catalog."

If you order this tool from Mr. Ludgate, be sure to mention The Harpsichord. Perhaps he'll decide to advertise.

When using the Tack-L-Tool, it is very important that it be solidly attached to a bench or table. It is possible to make a loop while holding the tool in your hand, but you'll end up with punctured thumbs from the wire ends. (Want to guess how we found this out?) If you don't want a permanent mount, screw the Tack-L-Tool to a piece of scrap lumber then clamp that to your workbench, kitchen table, or any other solid work area you can find. When you are finished it can be tucked away with other maintenance tools.

SAFE METHOD FOR CLAVICHORD TUNING

Dr. George Sargent, Department of Music of the University of Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh, suggests using a microphone connected through a radio or hi-fi system as an aid in tuning clavichords. Placing the ear near the string is a common but dangerous practice since the eyes are subject to injury in the event a string breaks. A mike resting on the soundboard will greatly amplify the sound of the string being tuned so the tuner can remain a safe distance from the string area.

UNIQUE SOLUTION FOR NON-PROFESSIONAL GROUPS WHO ARE MISSING A BASS STRING INSTRUMENT

Rev. Ronald Dahlheimer of Minnesota has a hint for string players in Baroque ensembles: "Put cello strings on a viola and tune it an octave lower than a violin G.D.A.E., and play the bass clef in the absence of a bass instrument. The cello strings must be cut shorter, but the tension is about right."

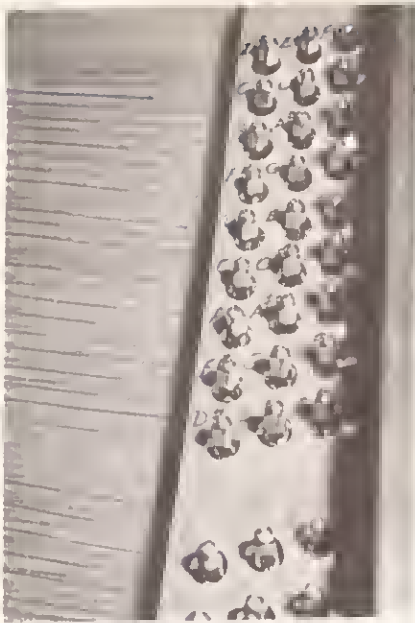
TUNING PIN IDENTIFICATION FOR CLAVICHORDS & VIRGINALS

Harpsichord builder Douglas Barclay of Santa Fe, New Mexico, supplies all his small instruments with a "Tuning Pin Finder" which speeds up tuning or stringing an instrument. It is made from a strip of plywood or masonite which has holes drilled exactly the same pattern as the tuning pins. This strip is then marked with the string name. When you want to find a string or strings rapidly, just slip this strip over the tuning pins and each pin is immediately identified.

Making the Tuning Pin Finder is easy. If your instrument has been built from a kit. Simply get the blueprint of the wrest plank, place a piece of plywood under it, and center punch each of the tuning pin locations. This will mark the exact spot on your strip which is to be drilled. If your instrument was built by someone else and you do not have a blueprint, place a piece of typing carbon paper, carbon side up, over the tuning pins. Place your masonite or plywood strip over this and tap lightly with a hammer. This will mark the bottom of your tuning pin finder. Drill each hole larger than the outside diameter of the tuning pins so the locator will slide over the pins easily.



The plywood or plastic strip is shown drilled, marked and ready to be placed over the tuning pins.



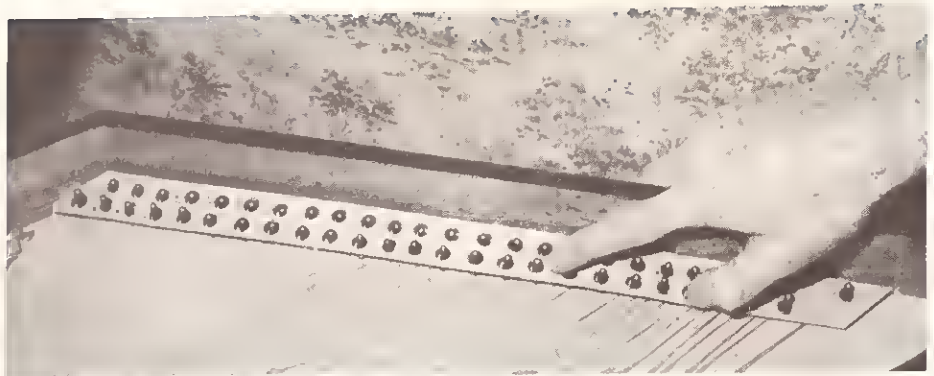
Once placed over the tuning pins, each pin is immediately identifiable.

JOHN CHALLIS USES UNUSUAL PLECTRA CUTTING TOOL

Probably the most difficult, critical and time consuming job a harpsichord builder has is voicing the instrument. A beautifully designed and constructed harpsichord can produce a dull and uninteresting sound if the builder does not have the tools, time or talent for this job.

The dean of harpsichord builders, John Challis, voices plectra with a scalpel-sharp double-edged steel razor blade which is manufactured by the Durham Enders Razor Company of Mystic, Connecticut. The blade is so sharp that the edge is almost invisible, yet the body of the blade is thick enough to give good control. If one has a good vise and is careful, the blades can be broken through the middle which makes them a little easier to handle and eliminates the possibility of cutting your fingers with the edge not being used.

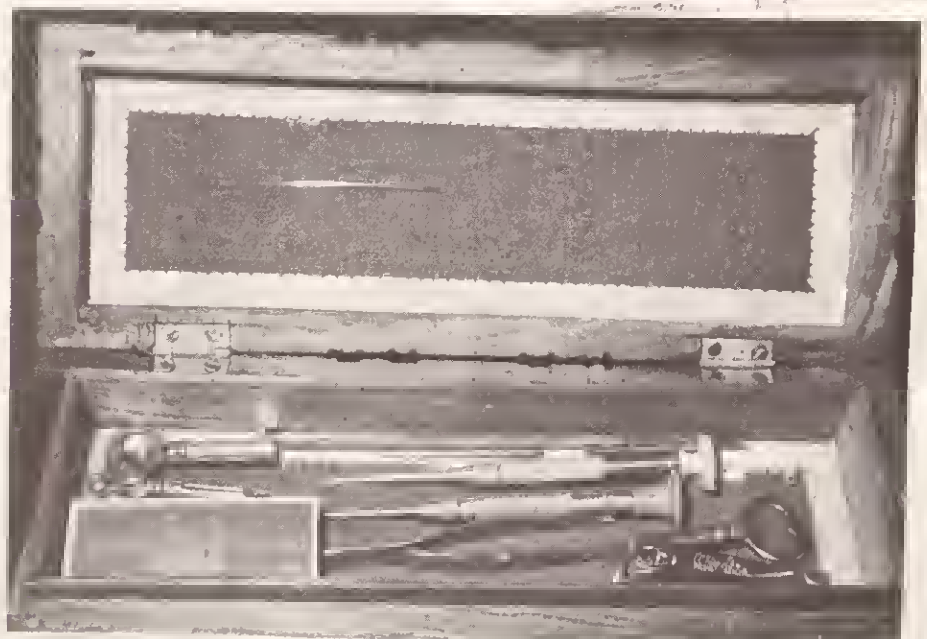
The blades are packed in a small red and gold box marked DURHAM DUPLEX on the cover. Each box holds 5 blades (10 cutting edges.) They are hard to find in modern stores, but one box will last the non-professional voicer for a lifetime. These blades, and 45 years of professional experience, will get you started in cutting plectra just as John Challis does.



This photograph illustrates the same type of tuning pin identification strip in place on an Italian Virginal.

HOW TO KEEP HARPSICHORD ADJUSTMENT TOOLS HANDY, YET OUT OF SIGHT

A decorative pencil or jewel box such as those imported from India or Iran and sold at import stores like Tang's, Cost Plus, Pier One, etc., make an excellent holder for tuning hammer, screwdriver, X-acto knife, rat-tailed file, tweezers, extra plectra, felts, leather, etc. The box can sit in plain sight on the harpsichord without giving your instrument a "workshop" appearance. The box shown has carved sides and brass inlay on the top and was priced in the neighborhood of \$5.00 in Denver. It is lined with blue flannel which helps protect delicate tools and makes a great place for storing long needles. Incidentally, long, darning needles are handy for picking up a piece of damper felt or lute-stop leather which has come loose and fallen unto the soundboard between the strings.





CONVERSATION with Harpsichordist *DENISE RESTOUT*



this connection that Restout first heard of us.

In 1969 I found a paper back edition of "Landowska on Music" which was edited and translated by Denise Restout. I was amazed at the depth with which the book was organized and the remarkable job of translation. After studying the book carefully, I knew it was quite important that I interview this remarkable woman who (with the exception of Landowska herself) knew more about Landowska than anyone who had ever lived. I had no idea of her background musically, her age, or personality. She was not listed in Groves (their loss) but I knew she spoke English because of the translations.

I wrote to her and asked for an interview. She kindly agreed.

Upon arriving in New York, I called Miss Restout at the Landowska Center in Lakeville, Conn. She answered the telephone herself. She had a charming accent and a very pleasant friendly voice. While I still knew very little about her, her voice indicated a woman of exceptional personal magnetism. The meeting was arranged for the next day.

At 9:00 a.m. the following morning I boarded a Resort Bus Lines bus at the N.Y. Port Authority Terminal for the three hour ride to Millerton which is near Lakeville. It had started raining the night before and the streets were still running full of water.

We left the Terminal from an underground exit and traveled the length of Amsterdam Street through squallor, slums, filthy streets and rows of apartment buildings with broken windows and garbage littered streets. The rain storm only heightened the heavy oppression of the area.

After leaving the city we passed through beautiful countryside which

My first thought of interviewing Denise Restout appeared sometime in 1967. Her name was always present when the name Wanda Landowska was mentioned. John Challis spoke of her several times during my first visits with him. There seemed, to me, to be somewhat of a mystery about her. Many people knew of her but I knew no one who knew her well.

One day while going through our membership files, I noticed her name and address. The first step toward an

interview had been taken since she at least knew something of the nature of *The Harpsichord* magazine.

Later, I discovered that several of her students were also members of the Society. One of our first members was Hugh O'Meagher who had studied both with Landowska and Restout. At that time he was Chairman of the Harpsichord Department of Peabody Conservatory-College in Baltimore. Hugh had written several articles for the magazine and perhaps it was through

through the sheets of rain that ran down the windows, reminded me very much of the rolling country north of London. It was a pleasant change from the urban decay of the city.

After passing through such famous old towns as Yonkers, Tarrytown, Ossining, Peekskill and Millbrook we arrived at Millerton at 12:10 p.m. It was decided that I should have lunch in Millerton, then call Miss Restout for the appointment at 1:30. She would then come down from Lakeville to pick me up since there was no convenient public transportation between the two towns.

The rain continued to pour over the countryside as I walked the several streets of Millerton looking for a restaurant. Only one was open. A chrome and glass "diner" which turned out to have surprisingly good food which was served in spotless surroundings.

After lunch I walked back through the rain to the one drug store which had a public phone.

I called Miss Restout, told her I had arrived, and would be standing outside the drugstore. The rain continued to pour down but it was only a few minutes before a blue car, which was about four or five years old, drove by, and through the rain, I caught a brief glimpse of a blonde or light-haired woman waving to me. The car went to the end of the block, made a "U" turn and came back. The passenger door opened, I closed my umbrella and got inside. I was very pleased with what I saw.

Denise Restout was much younger than I had expected and her smile was dazzling. She exuded warmth and instant friendliness. There was no question that this interview would be a joy to do. Her hair was that beautiful premature silver which is so very attractive on younger women. She had it pulled back severely into a bun. She commented on the terrible weather and indicated her disappointment that I should see Lakeville for the first time in the driving rain. Since I live in a semi-arid part of the world, where rain in any quantity is a rarity, I thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

As she drove, we talked about the

beautiful countryside and my bus trip from New York. We left Millerton on a two-lane road and headed into a heavily forested area which was lush with vegetation wet with rain. Within a few minutes we turned off the main road onto an extremely steep and twisting trail which wound through the forest. Amazed at the steep angle of the road and the hair-pin turns, I asked if it ever snowed in the area. Miss Restout laughed and answered that it did, and during those times, the car had to be left down below at the turnoff and the rest of the way had to be negotiated by foot.

We made a sharp left turn into a small clearing in the trees and there loomed the Landowska house.

It was a large wooden structure painted a mustard yellow which appeared to have seen a number of years of weather. To the rear and left side of the house, large trees grew closely together and cast dark shadows over the building. A large porch covered the front of the building and overlooked an opening in the woods. In the center of this opening stood one of the strangest and most hauntingly beautiful oak trees I have ever seen. It looked as if it were several hundred years old and was anchored in the earth so securely it could stand for several more centuries. The massive trunk was black and gnarled with age. At a height of about fifteen feet, the trunk separated into a dozen or more huge limbs, each the size of a telephone pole, which writhed and twisted about in a very tortured manner. The heavy rain rattled the leaves but those strong limbs were as steady as the large boulders which were strewn about the forest floor.

The fourth side of the house faced the small clearing which contained the parking area, an unpaved level spot where Miss Restout parked the car. The steps from the front porch were located at the end of the porch and descended to the parking area. They sagged on one end and seemed to be in need of paint and repair. I remember thinking at the time, how wonderful to see a sagging set of stairs on an old house in the gloom of the

forest and a pelting rain. Somehow it all seemed most appropriate.

Since the rain was obviously not going to slacken, we both ran, umbrella bobbing, to the porch. Upon climbing those stairs, I discovered that the heavy overhang of the roof and the many vines which climbed up the trellised sides of the porch made the entrance quite dark. The wooden floor was painted grey and a stack of folding chairs stood at the far end of the porch. The heavy vines diffused the sound of the rain and gave an unreal effect to the scene. Both the house and the day seemed completely isolated in time and space.

I shook my umbrella and carried it to the far end of the porch to dry. When I returned to the front door, Miss Restout had already entered and was waiting for me behind a large screen door. She paused for a moment before opening it for me and in the dimness of the interior and through the image-filtering effect of the screen, only her white hair and pale face were visible which seemed to float in dark, heavy space.

For an instant she appeared different from the woman I had met in the car. It seemed that a change had come over her and that she was debating with someone whether I should be admitted. This, of course, was just an illusion, but in the setting, it was an illusion which seemed most real.

A second later she opened the screen door and I stepped over the threshold.

While the outside was quite dim, the inside seemed almost dark. Before my eyes could adjust to the low light, I was immediately aware of a combination of aromas which rushed to me from deep within the building.

I can not recall the sequence in which these scents reached me, but they were born of age and darkness and memories of the past. I was immediately reminded of the earth cellar in my birthplace home in Pennsylvania where water used to slowly crawl down the stone walls and form shallow pools during a heavy storm. I was reminded of the smell of a trunk full of old lace and bolts of transpar-

ant burgundy, brown and tan velvet which my grandmother used to keep in a sewing room which was rarely opened. I was reminded of the odors of an abandoned hotel in my home town where once, as a young boy, I took shelter from a storm and the rain came slanting in through broken windows to be absorbed by a worn carpet whose pattern and color had long before merged into a somber grey. All of these wonderful, long forgotten aromas were mixed with the wet, decaying leaves which embraced the house on all sides. For a split second I was a child again, experiencing all those wonderful sights, sounds and sensations that are forever new to a young mind.

When my eyes trusted to the interior of the house, I found myself in a darkly paneled room with a high ceiling and wooden floor upon which sat heavy, square wooden furniture. Miss Restout spoke for the first time. Her voice was soft and mixed with the sound of rain.

"Here is where she lived and worked. This is her home."

She asked me to follow her and we entered a very pleasant room furnished with comfortable, upholstered furniture and a carpet. A well-proportioned bay window opened upon the woods. In front of this was a small, square table which was used as a desk. Everything was neat and orderly. Papers were arranged in graded

stacks. Books were positioned equidistant from each other; a letter opener, pen, notepad and paper weight were carefully arranged. A straight backed chair was placed in front of the table at a slight angle as if someone had just arisen from it. To the left of the table was a low couch which looked very inviting. Behind that was what looked a little like a coffin draped with a very heavy tatted quilt made of material patterned with large bouquets of flowers. A very high backed, upholstered chair stood at one end of the "coffin." A window, heavily draped, was set into the third wall. The fourth wall contained a large, open fireplace and in front of that stood a closed Challis clavichord. Larger than life photographs of Landowska hung on several walls.

As we stood quietly in this room the constant sound of rain filtered in through the bay window.

"This is the room where everything was done" Miss Restout said. "This table was her desk." Placing her hand on the back of the chair she added: "This is where she always sat while writing and . . ." motioning to the quilt covered "coffin" . . . this is her Pleyel. It was in this very room that all her last recordings were made."

The admiration and perhaps even awe Denise Restout still held for Wanda Landowska was remarkable. It

was not until later in the day, after our long meeting, that I could understand how this respect and devotion for Landowska could remain so strong and secure after all these years.

Miss Restout sat on the couch, sat at the desk and she told me how all happened.

DENISE RESTOUT: I was born in Paris. My parents loved music and my mother was quite a fine musician, pianist. When I was young, I had the choice of several careers since I studied drawing, painting and other forms of art at the same time I studied music. When I was 12 or 13 years old I passed two exams at the same time. One, to enter a school of applied arts in Paris and the other to enter the Paris Conservatoire. I didn't know what to do. It was a difficult decision for me to make for I loved both art and music and was quite young at the time. I think I must have had just a little more preference for music for that is what I finally chose.

HANEY: I assume you had studied piano with your mother.

DENISE RESTOUT: Yes, but not for very long. I had a number of different teachers before I went to the Conservatoire. It was there that I studied solfège, harmony, counterpoint and many other subjects as well as piano. Actually, I did not enter the piano class at the Conservatoire. I studied mostly solfège and harmony there. I took private lessons and worked for several years. I had very few classes, just the lessons. On top of that I worked eight hours a day at the piano. I really didn't enjoy it very much. At that time I thought perhaps I should study another instrument.

The first instrument which came to mind was the organ. I knew of organ teachers and I did not know where to go to for advice about organ study. My parents happened to live in a little town north of Paris called Saint-Laurent-La-Forêt. Landowska had started a school there a few years before. She had bought a house and in the back garden, she had built a concert hall and I had often attended her concerts held there during the summer. She used to play on Sunday afternoons



Mother suggested to me that I should ask Landowska for advice. I replied that I would never be able to even approach Landowska since she was such a superb and famous artist. Mother was much more brave than I was and she asked for an appointment for me.

Landowska's secretary told me, mother that I should plan to meet Landowska after the concert in the little green room. So with great trembling, this is what I did.

Landowska was seated in an arm chair receiving guests and when I was presented, she pointed to a little foot stool and asked me to sit there and wait until everybody had gone. I was amazed and entranced to see all the great musicians of the day come to see her.

Finally things quieted down and she turned to me and said: "What do you want to know?"

I told her that I was not happy with my piano studies and I would like to study the organ and would she recommend a teacher to me.

She said: "Well, I know very well, three of the greatest organists of the day; Joseph Bonnal, Marcel Dupré and André Marchal. Any of these would be an excellent teacher for you."

Then she asked: "Would you mind if your teacher was blind?"

I replied that I didn't know but it did not seem that it would make any difference at all. She thought for a moment and then said: "Well, I can not recommend any teacher until I know how advanced you are, what you are studying and things of that nature. Do come on Thursday and play for me."

I replied that I didn't play the harpsichord and she told me that she already knew that. When Thursday came, I was there, trembling I must say.

I played a Bach prelude and fugue and, in addition to that, some Debussy. She listened very patiently through the whole recital and then, instead of saying it was good or bad, she started showing me how this particular Bach piece should be played. She

picked out an ornament and suggested that it should be done in a different way and then played it for me. Right then and there she started to give me a lesson. It was marvelous!

When she finished she said: I think you should study with Joseph Bonnal and I am going to write a letter to recommend you to him and she did. I was delighted. Before I left, she turned to me and asked, "Do you like the harpsichord?"

I answered that I loved it.

"Then why don't you study the harpsichord?" she asked.

"Can I?" I replied. My parents were not very wealthy people and I knew it was not possible for me to do everything. She must have figured that out also, because then she said the most remarkable thing.

"Perhaps you can. I will talk with my secretary, she will talk with your mother and I am giving you a scholarship. Come to my Master Class next week."

That is how I started studying with Landowska. At the same time I studied with Bonnal. For three years I studied with both. But as time passed, I became more and more interested in the harpsichord so I finally stopped my organ studies and devoted myself entirely to the harpsichord. After about two years I became her assistant.

At this point she gave me students to prepare for her classes and my career was started.

HANEY: *What convinced you that you wanted to continue studying the harpsichord in preference to the organ?*

DENISE RESTOUT: I don't really know. I think there were several reasons. I loved both instruments, each for what it was. There was no problem of the literature since I studied only old music at that time. I studied no modern composers. Perhaps I liked the harpsichord a little better as an instrument. The organ was so enormous. Joseph Bonnal had quite a large and beautiful instrument in his studio in Paris. I could manage that one. However, in the summer he went to his chateau outside Paris and there he

had a tremendous instrument. Part of the pipes were in the main room and the rest of the pipes were scattered about other parts of this huge house and I couldn't stand the long delay in hearing the sound come to you. It would be some time after pressing down a key that one could hear the pipe speak because it was so far away. It was hard for me to adapt to that. I think that was probably one of the reasons I switched to harpsichord. And, of course, living in the same village with Landowska was like living in a large, delightful school. All the students were together and we not only had our lessons and classes but we could listen to each other and learn from each other. It was most interesting and a wonderful way of learning. I loved it.

HANEY: *Were there enough harpsichords for the students?*

DENISE RESTOUT: Oh yes. She always had one harpsichord in the house and in the concert hall there were two Pleyel harpsichords and there was a building in the back of the garden where students could practice and there was a Pleyel there so there were plenty of instruments. And, in addition to her Pleyels, she had a beautiful collection of old instruments, and we were allowed to see and touch them.

HANEY: *Were you taught maintenance?*

DENISE RESTOUT: One of the first requirements Landowska made was that her students had to go to the factory and learn everything about the Pleyel instrument. I went to the factory and worked with the man who built the harpsichords. He was a wonderful person. A real French craftsman. He dismantled the instrument completely and showed us how it was assembled bit by bit. He spent a lot of time teaching us how to cut the leather for the plectra, how to voice and things of that nature. I was so thankful for that experience and training because later on, when we came to the United States, there was no one in this country who could do this type of work and I had to do it.

HANEY: *Do you think this is im-*

portant for beginning students today?

DENISE RESTOUT: Absolutely. Absolutely. Every harpsichordist should know about the mechanism of the instrument and how to keep it in shape.

HANEY: *After studying with Landowska you said you became her assistant. What were your duties?*

DENISE RESTOUT: Landowska did not believe in just concentrating on one thing. She was a person of very wide interests and she believed others should not limit themselves. She believed people should learn about many things. One day she pointed to a machine and said; "This is a typewriter, why don't you learn to type?" I asked how I could do that and she just told me to start. So I learned that and it has been very useful.

My days were quite full because I always kept a few hours for practicing the instrument, then I was teaching quite a lot, not only harpsichord but piano and other subjects, and I often went to the libraries to do research for Landowska. This was what was so wonderful about her, she made me participate in her own work. Of course I also did some secretarial work, writing letters and things of that nature, which was also very important. I was able to learn how to deal with a musical career professionally. I went with her on concert tours and there I continued learning from her.

HANEY: *Do you recall the first time you accompanied her to a concert?*

DENISE RESTOUT: The first time I went with her on tour was to Bordeaux. She was giving a series of concerts there, some with orchestra and some recitals. It was very interesting, even though I was scared to death at the time. I was in charge of the transportation of the harpsichord and had to be sure that it would arrive on time, that it was packed properly and unpacked properly, set on the stage in the right place and so many things.

HANEY: *How was the harpsichord shipped?*

DENISE RESTOUT: Well, in those days, in France at least, it was placed in a very large case and shipped by train.

HANEY: *Did you travel with the same train which carried the instrument?*

DENISE RESTOUT: Quite often, because I wanted to be sure the instrument arrived on time and received proper treatment. Also, in those days, very often Pleyel would take care of the shipping and that made it much easier for me.

HANEY: *Were you involved in setting up appearances, concerts and things of that nature?*

DENISE RESTOUT: Not during her regular concert tours because she had a manager who did that. I did do the organization of the concerts she held at Saint-Leu-La-Forêt in her concert hall there. We prepared the announcements and everything.

HANEY: *While you were traveling with Landowska, what happened to your own career as a musician?*

DENISE RESTOUT: I continued to learn everything that was required for a concert career.

HANEY: *Where did you get your music? Did you copy it?*

DENISE RESTOUT: (laughter) Oh my, I copied a great deal of music. I wish I had a penny for every piece of music I copied. I would be very rich today. In those days, in the 30's, there were not many editions. Well, there were editions, but most of them were not very good, so I copied a great deal.

HANEY: *Where would you get the music to copy?*

DENISE RESTOUT: From her library. She had a splendid library in France. Unfortunately it was taken during the war by the Nazis. It was a tremendous and beautiful library. Then for the things she did not already own, I went to other libraries.

HANEY: *Did the Nazis destroy this music or do you think it was transferred to other libraries and might now be available?*

DENISE RESTOUT: I hope they are someplace but no one knows. Unfortunately, she did not have a catalogue of her library. At least not a complete one. I remember, about a year before the war started, I once told her that she should have a catalogue. She replied with a smile, "Well,

work on it." I had started the catalogue when the war started. I had about two thirds of it done when we were forced to leave that house forever.

We were told that when the Nazis came to our house, they had a catalogue of her library! We could never figure out how that happened, but we did. When we left, we took only a few precious things. A first edition Couperin and things of that nature. When they took over the house and entered the library, they had a list and said this and this and this is missing. They knew exactly what she had and what we had taken. To this day we don't know how it happened.

Some of her instruments, the ancient instruments of her beautiful collection, were found after the war in Germany and sent back to France but they were in such a terrible condition that they could not be restored. But the library has never been found.

HANEY: *We can all hope that the do still exist. Going back before the war, you had been traveling with Landowska and working as her assistant and secretary for how long?*

DENISE RESTOUT: About six years.

HANEY: *Could you explain the chain of events which would take place when a student would come to her and ask to study with her?*

DENISE RESTOUT: She would give them an audition and what happened later would depend upon that audition. If they were very advanced, she would work with them directly. If they were lacking in some of their training, she would ask me to work with them first. And this I often did. She would outline the program of study for the students and I would work with the students in developing the necessary skills. Here is an example.

Landowska had devised a whole program of technical exercises for the fingers and hands. I had worked very thoroughly with all of this and then part of the work she would assign me. Of course, I worked with them as far as music was concerned too, but this would be at her recommendation.

It was a wonderful opportunity for me to work with all these people.

who came from all over the world. At times we had a language problem, but we managed.

HANEY: *When would Landowska not accept a student?*

DENISE RESTOUT: Landowska had a very, very heavy schedule when she was traveling and preparing herself for concerts and recordings and writings and she couldn't take everybody. But otherwise, she would never reject a student unless she was absolutely certain that there was no hope for that person to really develop. She had that genius to bring out somebody and make them shine with a talent one might not think they had. Her patience was incredible. As a human being she was very quick and an energetic person, and perhaps not very patient in other matters, but the moment music was concerned, nothing else existed. She had this tenacity to work, to work, to work with herself. And with us. She would give us a very demanding class which would last three or four hours and at the end of that, she would say "And now I am going to work with the students who need help the most." And she would continue working for many more hours.

HANEY: *Landowska wrote throughout her entire life. Did you play a part in this? Did she dictate to you?*

DENISE RESTOUT: Yes, yes. For instance she wrote all her own program notes for her concerts. She was probably the first artist to do this. She said it was very necessary because at the time she started very few people knew about the type of music she was playing. She loved to explain. She loved to teach. She was a born teacher.

She gave the first complete performance of the Goldberg Variations in 1933. No one, at that time, had played the entire work on the harpsichord. She had studied this ever since she was 14 years old, but when she decided to give the performance she restudied the whole work for months and months. But at the same time she researched all she could find about this piece and studied very extensively. It was just the time I began to study with her so I was not too involved with this,

but later on, when she was preparing this type of thing, she would dictate to me and I would write it and type it up for her.

HANEY: *When Landowska was working on numbers for a recital or concert, would you, at the same time, work on those same pieces?*

DENISE RESTOUT: Quite often. Yes. She was so wonderfully generous in all her work that she often shared with me. She worked so intensely that when she would make a discovery of some sort, be it fingering, phrasing, registration, she wouldn't keep it for herself, she would call us and exclaim, "Look! I found this!" She was wonderful this way. Some years later, I remember when she was preparing the Well Tempered Clavier, for the recording, she had worked out a beautiful registration for one of the preludes just using the eight foot choirs, but a refined use of them. But she never wrote down the registration. Never. She said, "This is for this type harpsichord and if I play another instrument it would have to be changed, so why should I mark it." And, of course, she had an astounding memory. She left this piece alone for several weeks and then came back to it and, this time, could not remember what she had done. She knew I had been there watching and listening to her so she said to me: "Look, sit down with it and try to reconstruct what I had done." I answered, "This is impossible, how could I possibly do it?" But we were in luck. She had written down all the fingering, and through the fingering and the phrasing I was able to work out the registration. Of course it took me hours and hours to do it, but it was very interesting work. This is why I appreciated her so much. She would never keep for herself what she was doing. Never. She would always give, give, give.

HANEY: *Do you recall your first public recital?*

DENISE RESTOUT: The first time I played the harpsichord in public was at Landowska's Master classes in Saint Leu. You see, she had public Master classes, they were just like regular concerts and people came from all over to hear them. The only difference was

the fact that each student would only play one or two works instead of an entire program. I was scared. Terribly scared of all those people. And, on top of that, there was a music critic who sat very close, on the side, since all the regular rows of seats were filled. That man sat right near me and he had very dark eyes. He just stared at me and I was trembling.

He was a friend of Landowska's and later on I met him and he was the gentlest person in the world but at the recital I was as scared as if he were a monster.

But Landowska was wonderful in this respect. She made you feel at ease as much as one can feel at ease at your first public appearance. She had a way, especially in public. She would never criticize you harshly. She understood that you could make a few mistakes and she would pass by them and bring out the good that you had done. And then speak about the piece, not about the person, about the music and then explain about it and play it herself. Sometimes when she felt you were a little too nervous she would sit at a second harpsichord and improvise while you were playing. She would give you something that would sustain you.

HANEY: *Did you continue giving recitals and concerts?*

DENISE RESTOUT: I was just beginning my career when the war started but I had given recitals in Paris and in Strasbourg and such. I also played the continuo part in the recording of a Bach concerto while Landowska played the solo part, but the war came and we had to leave. That was quite an abrupt change.

HANEY: *You knew you had to leave in order to save your lives.*

DENISE RESTOUT: Landowska was, first of all of Jewish origin although she was two generations converted to Catholicism. In addition to this Jewish background she was also a Pole. As far as the Nazis were concerned, these were the worst things one could imagine. Also, they appreciated art and they knew the collection she had. Her life was very much in danger. But

(continued on page 14)

This beautiful French harpsichord was built by Pleyel in Paris during the year 1905. Because Landowska encouraged the director of Pleyel Piano Company, Gustav Lyon, and their Chief Engineer, M. Lamy, to produce a special harpsichord for her, it is often believed that Landowska was responsible for Pleyel entering the field of harpsichord building. This is not so. Pleyel started building harpsichords at the turn of the century. It was 12 years later that the 1st Landowska instrument with the 16' choir was built.

The instrument shown here is rather typical in size of early Pleyels. They had two 8's and a 4. Landowska played this type of harpsichord before the 16' was introduced by Pleyel. This particular instrument, which is now owned by the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. has a compass of FF to f³, two manuals, a lute and buff stop and 6 pedals. The casework is delicate and fairly well proportioned. While it does not have the delicate sweep of many Italian instruments, we must remember that it was built by a piano company.

The first Pleyels had a wooden frame and came closer to duplicating the early harpsichord than the big "Grands" which were produced later.



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(continued from page 11)

she never realized it until the last moment.

She loved France. She loved her house. She didn't want to leave.

Friends finally made her understand that her life was in danger and she had to leave.

HANEY: *Were you aware of this?*

DENISE RESTOUT: Only upon looking back on it. You don't believe it could happen at the time. No one wanted to believe it would be that bad.

HANEY: *You had to leave in great haste?*

DENISE RESTOUT: Yes. We waited and waited, each day believing that something would happen and we would not have to go. We were still there when the Nazis invaded the north of France and that was on the 10th of May, 1940. As they advanced, we could hear the bombing from our house in Saint Leu. They were fighting this war and advancing upon us just 20 miles away! We had even built a little shelter in the garden which, we now know, was ridiculous since we would have been killed there, either by the bombing, or they would have just captured us and sent us off to some unknown fate. When the fighting got closer, we finally realized all hope for a miracle was gone.

We left on the 10th of June and we had only one day, actually less than 24 hours to pack up what little we could save and head south. It was very sad. Landowska's life was in that house. All her music, all her beautiful instruments and all the work, endless hours of work, she had spent in making it a center for beautiful music. We didn't know how long this would last and we had hopes of returning at a later date, but that was never to be. Our maid, a very old lady, insisted on staying and taking care of the house and our dogs, we had many dogs at that time. She refused to come with us. It was indeed a sad day for us all.

One of Landowska's students had a house at Blois on the Loire River. This was south of Paris and it seemed so far away that we knew we would be safe there until after the war and fighting was over. We were there just

a few days when our hopes of protection were shattered.

I can still, to this day, see this woman coming into the house. She was as white as a sheet and we could tell at a glance that something was terribly wrong. "You must go at once," she said. "The Nazis have already arrived in Paris. They have taken over everything. Our capitol is gone. They are heading this way and will be here in no time."

What could we do. Where could we go. Our one chance was to get a train and head further south before they got there.

I ran to the station and discovered thousands of people trying to catch a train. There were no trains. All activity had stopped. The station was jammed with frightened people whose lives depended upon them leaving and yet there was no way out.

I was getting desperate at this time. What were we going to do? I thought about getting a car so I tried everywhere I could to find a car which was headed south but everyone who could go, had gone.

Nothing was working. Then I got the crazy idea that if I could find a bicycle we could go this way. I was grabbing at every straw I could to save us. While the bicycle did seem crazy it led me to something else.

I saw a little store where they sold bicycles and while I was talking with the woman in the store, I noticed through an open doorway at the back, a beautiful car sitting in the courtyard.

"Is that your car?" I asked.

She looked out the door and then turned to me and started crying. "My husband," she sobbed, "he has been hired by some people to take them back to Paris. They will all be killed!"

I asked her how much he was charging to go to Paris. She told me and while we had very little money, I told her we would give him 500 more if he would drive us south. She said she would have to convince him and that I should come back in an hour for his answer.

I went back and he had agreed to accept my offer and take us south.

Of course we didn't realize it at that moment, but his decision saved our lives.

His wife said we should return the next day at four in the morning. I questioned this very early hour and she assured me it was absolutely necessary if we were to escape.

We left before dawn the next morning, crossed the river and headed south. Later that day, the house in which we were staying was bombed and everything in it was destroyed. The bridge we had to cross in order to go south was also bombed. If we had waited one more day, or perhaps even hours, there is little doubt that we would have lost our lives.

We drove south to the area of Montauban and then went on to the Pyrenees Mountains and the town of Banyuls-sur-mer where the sculptor Maillol lived and worked. He was a good friend of Landowska's and was able to find us an apartment. I say "us" and I really mean "us" for at one time there were five people living in this little three-room apartment.

In early October I received a message from my parents through the underground. They told me that something terrible had happened to Landowska's house. Because of the difficulty in communication through the underground they were not able to describe what had happened but we understood that it was terrible.

This was a time when France was already divided into two parts. The so-called Free French and the northern part which was occupied. At that time, it was already after the Armistice, the Germans had said that the people who had gone to the south but who wanted to go back home would be given a pass to go home, but that was that. After you got back you could not again leave.

We talked it over and we decided that perhaps I should try to go back to see what had happened. So I did. And what I saw there at the house, will never forget the rest of my life.

It was horrible. Absolutely horrible.

The Nazis had come early in September knowing exactly what was

the house and concert hall. They had brought crates, boxes, trucks and everything in order to cart everything we had away. That's what they did. The condition of our beautiful house made me weep. Everything was thrown on the floor. Things were pulled from the shelves and scattered about like wild beasts were loose. For example, there was a little room where Landowska used to have her meals. All the drawers and cupboards had been opened and the contents thrown onto the floor. One detail still stands out in my memory after all these years. There was a jar of honey which had been opened and you could see how this honey had been pulled out of the jar with dirty fingers. There was still the mark of fingers on the honey. The whole thing was so horrible. I really didn't know what to do.

I went to whatever was left of the French Government and they tried everything they could to keep our things from leaving France, since we thought they were probably still in the country. We know they would want to ship them to Germany, but there was absolutely nothing we could do. We were powerless.

I stayed in Paris that entire winter but it was useless. I was unable to find anyone who could help our cause.

We understood that Landowska had to leave France completely. It was obvious that the whole of France would be taken by the Nazis and her life would again be in great danger. They would not give me permission to go back to the south of France and communication lines were very few. Only through the underground was it possible to get messages through, and those were by necessity, very brief and cryptic.

I did finally receive a message from Landowska that she had decided to leave for America and she wanted me to go with her. The note indicated that I was to try to get back into the south of France and we would leave from there. But how could I do it? That was the problem. I could not receive permission to leave the occupied part and the borders were guarded very heavily with armed soldiers.

I started searching for a way and finally found a friend who said he occasionally had to cross over and had found a way to do it illegally. He told me it was dangerous and the risk of being discovered was high, but it was the only way to get out. He was going to make another trip and he said that if I really wanted to try to escape, I could go with him. I decided to do it. There was no other way.

The soldiers were everywhere but there were people who were making a business of getting people out of the occupied zone. They knew the countryside very well, and of course they were paid very well for their knowledge and help. We took a train to a little town near the demarkation line and spent the night there. It was here we contacted the man who knew how to get us through the guards.

We were to meet at about three o'clock in the morning at a certain spot in town. Of course we couldn't have any luggage, except what little we could carry. When we were all assembled there were about a dozen of us. We were all put into the back of a big truck and pushed together into the front part of the truck bed. As we huddled all together a big canvas was placed over us and then they loaded in some cows. They used to transport animals from one place to another and this was one of those shipments. We were told to keep absolutely quiet and that the slightest noise could cause us to be discovered since the guards were constantly looking for this sort of thing. We traveled in silence for some length of time. I don't know how far because we couldn't see anything. When the truck finally stopped we knew we were at the German control point since we could hear the voices of the soldiers.

I held my breath as they opened the back of the truck and looked at the cows, but they did not see us under the canvas. It was dark and I'm sure that was a big help.

They passed us through and we drove on to an area known as "no-man's land". It was a section of land between the two zones and we were let out of the truck there. The sun was

not yet up so we were still protected by cover of darkness. We found ourselves in a big field which had just been plowed and it was terribly difficult to walk over it and, of course, our footprints could be seen. About a mile away, up a sloping hill, was a woody area with some trees. We could just barely see it silhouetted against the hill. A man in charge then got us together and said, "Run! Run to those trees since that is the French side and you will be safe. But you must run fast because the light is coming and you will be seen!"

We ran as fast as we could but it was hard running in the plowed field. There were old people with us who fell down again and again and we would go back to help them up and urge them to hurry before the light came. That mile was the longest mile in my life. I don't know how we did it but we all made it to safety before the sun came out. But the man who helped us was not as fortunate.

He had to go back and by this time the dawn had arrived and he was seen. We heard the soldiers shooting and if he was not killed at that moment, he was most certainly captured. We don't know what happened to him.

I was able to get into the next town and get a train which carried me back to Landowska in Banyuls-sur-mer. It took us several months before we could find passage on a ship which would take us to America. Finally in November, 1941, we left from Lisbon. We had to go through Spain from France which was very difficult at that time since Spain was filled with Nazis. We could only get a transit visa. But we did make it to Lisbon safely, sailed for America and arrived in New York City on Pearl Harbor Day, December 7, 1941, which wasn't the best day to arrive with a harpsichord.

HANEY: *How did you get a harpsichord?*

DENISE RESTOUT: Well, most of the time we were in the south, we did not have an instrument but an amazing thing happened. A student of her's from Switzerland came to see Landowska at Banyuls-sur-mer and was distressed to see her without an instru-

ment. So she went back home and sold her life insurance to buy the last available Pleyel in Paris. Another student managed to get permission to ship that harpsichord to the south of France. That's a very amusing story because she went straight to the Commander in Paris and was received by a German officer. She told him she wanted to send a piano to the south of France, "A piano", he asked. "You want permission to ship a piano?" "Well," she replied, "it's really a harpsichord." "For whom?" he asked. "For Wanda Landowska." "Oh I admire her music so much" he exclaimed, "I am from Vienna!" So he signed the permit. Pleyel shipped the harpsichord in a box which had her name written across it in letters a foot high and it went through the whole of France without incident. It was a miracle.

We did look rather suspicious arriving in America with practically no luggage and one large harpsichord. That very day the government had rounded up all the Japanese people and had put them in confinement and we were placed on Ellis Island. We didn't know why we were there or why we were being held. At that time I did not speak one word of English. Not one word. Landowska spoke some English but not me. It was very confusing. We didn't know why we were being held. Finally we were told that our passports were only good for three months. In order to let us in they had to be for more than that, or perhaps it was our visas which were only for three months. We were there all day, all night, the next day and the next day. We didn't know what was going to happen.

Some friends of ours knew we were arriving and they finally discovered that we were being held on Ellis Island. The singer Doda Conrad, who was the son of a classmate of Landowska, went to every musician in New York and got letters from them for the authorities telling who Landowska was and why she should be permitted to enter the country. Finally we were released but we had to deposit a bond of \$500 for each of us. That was \$1,000 and we only had a total of

\$1300 to our names, so we arrived in the New World with a harpsichord and \$300.

We had to start life all over again in a strange land and Landowska was already, at that time, passed 60. It was not easy for her to start again, especially after losing absolutely everything. Of course she still had her talent and courage. Great courage.

We had to find a place to live so we went to a dingy little hotel near Times Square where Landowska had stayed 20 years before during a New York concert. What we didn't know was that in the meantime it had gone downhill considerably and was a terrible place. At that time it was called the Langwell, I believe the name has changed now.

We stayed there through the winter and Landowska and I both gave lessons this first winter. After a few days she decided that she should record and we could get some income in that way. We ran into some bad luck because just then there was a strike in the recording industry which lasted for three years. It was the worst possible thing. Since she could not record, she decided to give a recital in Town Hall. It was her desire to do the complete Goldberg Variations, but that brought a negative response from her manager.

He told her that she didn't realize that she hadn't played in New York for 14 years and people here don't even know what the Goldberg Variations are. "You can not play this" he told her, "it will be a complete disaster."

Very calmly she replied; "I am going to play the Goldberg Variations."

She did play the entire work and it was a wonderful success. We had to turn people away.

HANEY: *Then you were financially able to continue.*

DENISE RESTOUT: Well, it was a start. It was a start. Then she started teaching and gave several other concerts. But the first concert is still remembered as a memorable experience. When she appeared on the stage that time she was so tiny and so frail looking. Remember she had gone through

almost starvation in France and she was so thin that people in the hall did not think she would be able to play much of anything. Then she started to play.

There was something like a miracle about it. I had heard her play the Variations probably 30 or 40 times but this was the most marvelous I have ever heard. When she finished, she looked like a young girl. People still speak of that performance.

These successes made it possible for us to rent a house in Scarsdale, New York. Landowska loved the countryside and hated to stay in the city. During that summer I went looking for an apartment in New York because Landowska had decided to give Master Classes again and she needed a large place in the city to do so. By pure luck I found a beautiful apartment at 50 Central Park West which was on the corner of 65th Street and Central Park West. It had a tremendous livingroom which was large enough to hold two pianos, two harpsichords and 100 chairs. Of course the building was also going down in quality but it was a wonderful place for us. Most of the apartments were rented by opera singers.

HANEY: *This was in the '40's?*

DENISE RESTOUT: Yes. We kept the apartment until 1950 but already three years before that in 1947, we had found this house in Lakeville. At that time we used it only for the summers. And it was again, by chance that we found it.

In 1946 we had spent one summer in Sharon, a little village about six miles from here where Magnolia music is located. We stayed at an Inn for a very short period of time, about three weeks, and Landowska loved the countryside around here. She didn't like living in the city all the time. When we returned to New York she thought we should try to find a house in the area to rent for the following summer. So every day I watched the New York Times for real estate advertisements and one day I saw two houses for rent in Lakeville. I told Landowska I would go and see what they were like.

It was a very nice morning in April so she decided to go with me. We went by train and were met at the station by the real estate lady. We came to this house first. It was occupied at the time by other tenants but when we opened the door, Landowska looked around and immediately said: "I'll take it." I was stunned. She was usually very difficult when it came to finding the right kind of place. I told her that she could not decide so quickly since she had not even seen the rest of the house. She replied "I know this is the place I want."

We moved in for one summer. We brought one harpsichord and she was very happy that summer. She went for long walks every day. Walks that lasted for at least two hours or more. She loved the quiet, the trees and the twisting roads without cars. That particular year her concert season was beginning in January. One day she turned to me and said: "Why don't we stay longer?" So we did. We stayed through October, November, December, and went back to New York just before the concert. Just as soon as the series was over we came back here. For three years we spent half the time here and half the time in New York.

At that time, it was the beginning of recording on tape. We met a recording engineer who was experimenting with this new process and he came to the house and thought this room had possibilities for making good harpsichord recordings. I played two suites which he recorded and the sound was rather good. We took the tapes and went to R.C.A. Victor and told them it has been made, not in a studio, but in a house in Lakeville. Why can you not do your recordings there? we asked.

They studied the tape very thoroughly and decided that they might be able to do it. From that day on all her recordings were made in this house. This was marvelous for her because she could do it at any time of day or night she wanted and not be limited to the impossible schedules in the studios in New York. She didn't like recording in New York. The last re-

cording she made there was in June and it was terribly hot and the air conditioning system made noise so it had to be turned off. But when it was turned off the temperature change was so vast the harpsichord went out of tune. It was terrible there, but wonderful here.

They could come here for three or four days and use the library for the machines and the microphones would be in this room where she could close the doors and be by herself and play without interruption.

HANEY: *Was she generally satisfied with the results of the recordings?*

DENISE RESTOUT: Oh yes. Especially when they were made here. Here she had all the time in the world to listen over and over and reject what she didn't like. She said she hated the word "perfectionist" but in a way she was a perfectionist because she would never compromise. Her standards were tremendous. Anything which she did not like completely . . . out. "We make it again," she would say. This is why she liked recording because she could obtain the quality she desired.

HANEY: *Did Landowska select the photographs or drawings which appeared on each album cover as they were released?*

DENISE RESTOUT: They have an art department in all recording companies and sometimes they would ask her whether she would like a picture or not but most of the time they decided themselves. Sometimes she did not like the covers at all!

HANEY: *Some of the best photographs taken of Landowska were taken by you. What is the story behind that?*

DENISE RESTOUT: (laughter) Just because I wanted to take pictures of her hands! I don't know anything about photography. One day for my birthday she gave me a large Graflex Reflex camera with the folding hood and I started shooting pictures. Then later I started developing them myself. Then for another birthday she gave me an enlarger so I started enlarging them also. I enjoyed it very much but I am no photographer at all.

HANEY: *Was she averse to having*

her picture taken?

DENISE RESTOUT: She did not like to pose for photographs. She was very annoyed when the photographers would want her to pose for them. If we did not disturb her she did not mind it. But otherwise she said, "They torture me."

HANEY: *Let's talk for a moment about your students. You have had many students who have become professional harpsichordists and others who have become teachers of harpsichord. It must be very gratifying to you to know that you have contributed to many future generations of harpsichordists.*

DENISE RESTOUT: I hope I have contributed. It is indeed very rewarding when you believe in something. When you know that to you, it is the right way. It's marvelous to be able to pass it on to others. In one way it is a wonderful thing, and in another way it is very disappointing.

Students don't always study long enough to absorb all that could be and should be absorbed. They go out into the world with only part of it. That is disappointing. But what can you do? I think I am more aware of it because of my long association with Landowska and her teachings. Even her students would come to her for a certain period of time. They have learned a great deal during that time, but then they left and they may have not had time to get the whole picture. The whole of her teaching. That is what is disappointing in teaching. I know it because I stayed with her so long and have observed the whole of the work. Today, when I hear some critics making remarks about Landowska I am always sorry that these people did not stay long enough to understand what she meant when she recommended various methods, interpretations and things of that nature. But I suppose this always happens when a great artist has students.

HANEY: *When you listened to Landowska play, did you ever project yourself into Landowska's role as a famous performing artist?*

DENISE RESTOUT: No. I love to play and I have always loved to play,

but to me she was such a great, great person and great, great artist. I never had the idea of even trying to emulate her. I loved to learn from her as much as I could. I thought this was such a privilege. She had many students in her life, but how many were so close for so many years. I thought this was an opportunity that one has once in a lifetime. Why should I leave her and go playing in various places, making mistakes and compounding them since she was right there and I could learn all the time. I never had the desire to make a concert career because I was much happier watching what she was doing and trying to learn as much as possible. I am very happy I did.

After she died I had a choice to make. I could have started a career of my own at that time, or to continue her teaching. It wasn't difficult for me to make my choice because, here I was, the only person in the world who had so much of her. She left me all her notes, her books, her music and her documents and having the experience of working with her for so long why keep this to myself? If I did that, this would mean that only one person would play the harpsichord better because of this knowledge while if I taught others, then so many more people would be able to learn from these experiences and these wonderful teachings. I decided the teaching must be continued, and that is what I am doing now.

HANEY: *There is a vast movement today to use little or no changes in registration and use perhaps only one eight foot choir or two at the most. What is your comment on this current phase of harpsichord playing?*

DENISE RESTOUT: It is a reaction right now. When one artist develops one style to its upmost then other artists wonder what they can do. You can't go any higher so you must take the opposite side and do exactly the contrary. I think that is what is happening today. We could bring this question to the instrument. There is much criticism of the Pleyel instrument. People say it is too this or too that. Let's take the question of the harpsichord.

When Landowska started to revive the interest in the harpsichord, when she first arrived in Paris in 1900 she realized that the music of Bach was not written for the piano therefore she should find the instrument for which it was written. She went into all the museums of Europe where they had some instruments. She studied them very carefully. Not just one period but all periods from the earliest instruments to those of the 18th century. She observed how they were made. Now, she wanted to have an instrument to work on. Well, what did she have in Paris at the time?

Pleyel, and Etienne Gaveau were making a few instruments. Pleyel was making a rather small instrument at that time. By small I mean they had two keyboards and two eight foot choirs and a four foot. That is what she used in the beginning. But she was not completely satisfied with that. What had happened was that before her time several pianists in France had begun to play the harpsichord but they knew nothing about the technique of the instrument. They did much more harm to the advancement of the harpsichord than if they had done nothing.

She had first to fight against that idea. And, mostly, Landowska was a musician. Her first concern was the music. She studied the music of Bach very thoroughly. Not only the keyboard music, but the passions; the cantatas; she studied all of Mozart's operas; she studied Handel's oratorios and not just keyboard music. She studied the music, all music, of that period. She became convinced that the harpsichords available at that time would be fine for early music, or music from the beginning since they did not have large instruments. But she wanted to present all the music composed for the harpsichord from the 16th, 17th, and 18th century. So she needed an instrument that could do justice to music that needed more color changes and music that was more orchestral in character. For instance, she studied the Concerti Grossi of Vivaldi. Then she studied the Bach transcription of them for the harpsichord. Bach meant

to show that on the harpsichord you can play orchestral passages and you can play solo passages. Therefore you need different registration. You need variety of registers and color. Having this in mind, and having studied the music very carefully she took one engraving from Pleyel and went with him to see these instruments in the museums. He took the plans of many of them. She asked them to build an instrument that would have the typical registers of an 18th century instrument. She wanted two keyboards, two eight foot, a four foot and a sixteen foot. That poor sixteen foot! (laughter) It has been so distorted through so many years.

Not because she wanted to use the sixteen foot from beginning to end. When you hear people talking about it today, one would think that Landowska never stopped using the sixteen foot. It is ridiculous. She wanted it for the large orchestral effect of a concerto which needed a lot of sound. Also, she wanted a differentiation of tonal color between each register. Again, as in the instrumentation of a score. You have wind instruments then strings come in and things of this nature. She wanted to be able to produce these qualities on the harpsichord. She was thinking, not only of the keyboard works, but works for a variety of instruments.

Pleyel worked on these ideas and came up with this instrument. In the beginning it did not have the metal frame but they developed that later. In the early days, there were people who could not afford large instruments, just as there are today, but that does not mean that there were no large instruments then. We agree that in the beginning there were no instruments with sixteen foot, but as time progressed we knew that there were sixteen foot instruments. There were fewer of them of course, but they did exist. This was not an invention of Landowska. Look at the organ. It had a sixteen foot for a long time. Why are we so against the poor sixteen foot on the harpsichord?

Now, today, people want to go to the authentic instrument. They want to go back to the original measurement

and plans. That is fine. But the thing that amuses me tremendously with modern builders, pretending that they are absolutely authentic, yet they use plastics, metal, and all type of things that never existed during the early days of harpsichord building. How can they call them authentic? Actually, the Pleyel is more authentic than many of these so called authentic instruments because it uses leather, it uses wood and other things that were used in the early day. That's why we have to take these "authentic" instruments with a little grain of salt. People have a tendency to exaggerate one way or another. HANEY: *Do you find that your students tend to under-register instead of over-register, if we could use those words?*

DENISE RESTOUT: No. With my students the problem is completely different. In teaching, I try to explain the reasons behind the registration Landowska used. Her registration was not just for fun or to use lots of color and flash but was absolutely tied in with the construction of the piece, with the period of the piece, with the character of the piece and with everything that had to do with the music. This was the same way she approached ornamentation. Ornaments were, for her, part of the music. This is why she never played a trill the same way twice when they appeared twice in a row because they were part of the harmony of that passage, they were part of the melody line. They were part of the music, they were not just tacked on as an afterthought. That is what I am trying to teach my students. I have never had any difficulty whatsoever in teaching them registration because it is part of learning the music. It is not just a fad or a whim of the moment, it is part of the music. It comes from the character of the piece you are studying. Registration almost comes naturally. It is architectural.

HANEY: *Did Landowska use registrations or interpretations that you did not agree with?*

DENISE RESTOUT: Certainly. She did things that she did not agree with herself. (laughter) This is another point. Landowska never imposed on

anyone anything. She never pretended that her way was the only way. Never. But she could explain why she was doing something. So you take it or you leave it. After years of work she would say "Well, at that time I was doing this in a certain way, but I have studied a lot since then, and I don't think that was right. Now I will do it differently. I will do it this way." An amusing thing happened which demonstrates this very clearly.

A student of hers who had worked with Landowska in France in the 20's met us about 20 years later. Wanda was working on a piece that this student had studied with her many years ago. Landowska was telling her "I do this, I do this," and the student cried "But you did not tell me this when I studied with you." And Landowska replied; "My dear, that was 20 years ago. Do you think I have stayed at the same point I was 20 years ago? I have worked a great deal since then, and I have discovered a lot since then and now, at this point, this is how I believe it should be played. This is what I am now doing, and this is why I am doing it." And that is how she worked. Always growing. Always improving when she found additional information which indicated that a change should be made.

HANEY: *I understand Alice Ehlers was one of Landowska's first students. Do you know her?*

DENISE RESTOUT: I do not know her personally but she was one of Landowska's first students during the first world war.

HANEY: *She has a Pleyel. One she has had for many, many years.*

DENISE RESTOUT: That is the instrument Landowska had during the first world war at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin. When she left Germany she let Ehlers get that instrument from Pleyel. It was quite a story.

In 1913, when Landowska was beginning to be successful with the revival of the harpsichord, the Hochschule in Berlin instituted the first harpsichord class and asked her to come and teach. It was quite a triumph since she was Polish, bringing a French instrument into Germany. She

started teaching there and her husband came with her. Also, her parents were at that time in Berlin when the first world war started. They were stuck there. They could not leave. She had her two brothers in France fighting in the French army while she taught in Berlin during the entire first world war. And that is where she met Alice Ehlers. She had that Pleyel harpsichord there at that time. When the war ended and she was ready to return, her husband was killed in an automobile accident and she came back by herself. She left the Pleyel in Germany and Alice Ehlers purchased it at that time. I assume this is the same Pleyel Dr. Ehlers is still using in California.

HANEY: *You had mentioned earlier that some of the instruments in Landowska's collection had turned up after the war.*

DENISE RESTOUT: Yes. They had been returned to Paris but they were in terrible condition. Terrible. They had been first placed in an underground salt mine in Austria and then shipped to a warehouse in Leipzig. A bomb fell on that building and a section of it was destroyed and damage to the instruments was severe. I saw them in 1954 but very little was left of the instruments and many were completely missing. Of those still in existence, most of them had no keys, no strings, no jacks and no interior at all. Many just had the outside case.

HANEY: *Where are they now?*

DENISE RESTOUT: I don't really know. Some of them have probably been sold and others "restored", but these restorations leave much to be desired. Here is an example.

She had a lovely little Swiss organ. When I saw it after the war there was just part of the lower cabinet and part of the upper cabinet. There were no pipes or anything like that. It turned up for a sale a few years ago and it had been electrified and they were asking a tremendous price for it. It was ridiculous! It was not Landowska's organ at all. Most of the time, I am against restoring old instruments. Either they are not in too bad shape and you can replace just



a few parts to put it in good shape and have almost the original instrument, or it is so badly in need of repair that restoring it produces a completely different instrument. So why do it? It would be much better to study what is left very, very carefully and then build a new one with those measurements than to remove the possibility of ever doing this in the future by rebuilding one of these beautiful old instruments.

HANEY: *I have heard that you are now working on a new book on Landowska. Is this true, and if it is, how is it progressing?*

DENISE RESTOUT: Yes I am. I am working on three books, but the book you mention is not progressing as fast as I would want for one reason.

Among the papers Landowska left I discovered ten notebooks written in Polish. She had written these when she was a young girl, between the ages of 16 and 19. I don't know by what miracle but they were saved. Landowska had looked at them in later years but had made no comment. She had just annotated a few passages. I did not know what they contained since Polish is not one of my languages. I hesitated turning over these papers to a translator since Landowska was such a famous person and these were written very early in her life. They might contain very confidential material or material which might be misinterpreted. So I waited. I continued working on other parts of the book until one day the postman brought me a letter.

This letter was from a priest, a monk in a monastery in Wisconsin. He said in his letter, "This letter is three years late. I have read your book *Landowska on Music* and I wanted to write to you about it." He mentioned that he was Polish and was interested in harpsichord music. We wanted to know if the harpsichord was a proper instrument to have in church and things of that nature.

I wrote to him and sent a photograph of Landowska playing in a cathedral in Paris and explained that of course the harpsichord was proper in church. At that time, I mentioned

these note books and asked if he knew anyone I could trust entirely who could translate these books.

He answered that he would be delighted to do it himself. So he started on it. He is working on the last one now. He came here several times this summer and I found him to be a wonderful person. We became quite good friends. He is doing a marvelous job of translating. Since he is a musician, his background is excellent to translate this particular work. I found a great deal of valuable and important things in these notes which I will use in the book. That's why it is taking longer than I had originally planned.

HANEY: *In your book "Landowska on Music" you did not seem to inject your own thoughts or opinions, do you plan to do the same with the biography?*

DENISE RESTOUT: I think it would be dishonest to give my opinions or color it in any way. I am trying to forget that I knew her too well. It should be hers with no opinion of my own. First of all I will use a great deal of her own writing. She kept many journals and wrote a great, great deal. Not only about music. The thing about Landowska which is bad is that many people reduce her to just being a harpsichordist. She happened to revive the harpsichord but she could have played any other instrument and could have done any other thing and would have been just as great a person. In the first place, she was a great human being. She wrote about many different subjects, not only music. She was a very cultivated person and constantly read and studied all the best literature. She knew so many languages that she could read the original editions. She knew Polish, German, French and English and while she did not speak Italian she read it well, as well as Spanish. She had quite a span of culture she could call upon.

Near her bed she had a long table and on that table was a radio, a phonograph, a stack of records, a stack of books and paper and pencils. She slept very little. Often I would awaken very late in the night and I

would hear her phonograph or radio playing beautiful music. She would be studying all the Bach cantatas or the Mozart operas until the small hours of the morning.

HANEY: *Have you considered doing an autobiography?*

DENISE RESTOUT: (laughter) No. No. If I live long enough . . . the biography is only one thing. At this same time I am finishing a book which has nothing to do with Landowska which is about the relationship of ear training and the appreciation of music. This is really a subject I have had in mind for a long time. I wanted to present the teaching of music in a different way. That is almost finished. But after the biography, I have a collection of notes which I took during Landowska's classes and lessons since 1933 so I have huge stacks of notes. I want to extract from these as much of her principles of interpretation that I can. Also I want to include her technique since nothing was been published on that subject. It is a tremendous task and I will have to live a long time just to get these books done without writing about me.

HANEY: *One of our readers wanted to know if there was any possibility of publishing Landowska's manuscripts with her notes, fingering, etc.*

DENISE RESTOUT: Yes. That is another project I have. I want to publish a great deal of the music she has annotated, but it is a lot of work. If you only see these manuscripts, you will not understand them. It needs a lot of explaining especially to someone who has never studied with her. It has to be accompanied by lots of notes and explanations.

Also, another project I have involves her compositions. She took some Polish folk songs and arranged them for groups of instruments. I have the manuscripts of these and I would like to publish them sometime. They are beautiful.

HANEY: *I have a recording on which Landowska plays a composition she wrote based on an old Polish dance.*

DENISE RESTOUT: As a little girl she spent her summers in the country and she recalled all these songs she

heard sung by the peasants. Later on she noted these down and used them in different compositions and arrangements.

HANEY: *Do you have a "Denise Restout" who is working with you as you worked with Landowska?*

DENISE RESTOUT: (laughter) That is a big problem. This is exactly what I need. Another myself. I have too much to do. This is my trouble. Too much to do. It is very difficult to find somebody who would have the same drive or the same interest I have and what I am trying to do. Students want their own careers, either teaching or giving concerts and the necessities of life oblige them to do it. I cannot expect any of them to sit down here for the rest of their lives and work with me as I did with Landowska. I am not rich, and can not keep them. It is a big problem, but I hope some day I will find someone.

HANEY: *You plan to remain here at the house?*

DENISE RESTOUT: The house. I have not yet told you about the house and all the help I need.

This house was only rented. After Landowska died, I continued to rent it because so much of her is in this house which I wanted to preserve. Last year, the owner died and her heirs wanted to sell the house. I was absolutely desperate because as you well know, musicians are not rich people and especially the type of work I am doing does not bring in large sums of money.

I did not know what to do. But I have wonderful friends and they said they must try to help me stay in this house. They did not know how to do it, but they would try. First we were going to form a corporation or a foundation or something like that but these things take a lot of time. Suddenly we were faced with the problem that we had to give an answer immediately. Yes or no. What could I do. I was about to lose Landowska's home.

Three people came to my aid; the Rev. Joseph Forte, and Mr. and Mrs. John Byrnes. Rev. Forte is a wonderful musician, composer and pianist and he adores music. He is the priest of

the Catholic church here and his only regret is that he was not here when Landowska was living here. I met Mr. and Mrs. Byrnes through my association with the church and while they are not professional musicians, they understood what I was trying to do. They understood that what I was doing was valuable and what was in this house was precious and should be preserved. This is the only house left where Landowska lived. Some people say that it is not fireproof, that I should have a brick building, that it should be located in a city, but how can you transport the atmosphere of this place to another area? You can't. This is where she lived. Where she worked. She made all her recordings for 10 years here. The only television film that was ever made of her was made right here in this room. And why do people come to study with me here. Because this was where Landowska was. This is her instrument, here is where she wrote, here is where she walked. These things are important to students. These marvelous people, Rev. Forte and Mr. and Mrs. Byrnes understood this. We didn't have time to form anything official and approach many people. We were faced with the fact that we had to get an amount of money together immediately and get it to the bank for the mortgage.

These three wonderful people, and also my father Fernand Restout, who was 84 years old and retired and was not a rich person, they got the money and helped me make the deposit on the house. And of course I

had a small amount of my own. So it was saved. The world owes them a great debt of gratitude for their selfishness.

But now things are beginning over again because so many things must be done. This is a very solid building but the house needs a lot of repairs. There is a wonderful barn at the back which is three stories high and beautifully built. Later on, if I can get help, I would like to put it to use as a concert hall and perhaps room for students, practice studios or something like that. It could be very useful. It is a very big job and I am alone trying to do something which requires more finances than I have.

I am starting from scratch again. It was the same thing after Landowska died. I found myself alone here and had to make a decision just like this. Probably it was the craziest idea I want to keep this house because it is a big place but I thought I could not destroy the home where Landowska had lived. The place she had been in France was destroyed, how could anyone just in cold blood destroy the only place left. If I had gone elsewhere of course I would still have her instrument, her books and writings but it would not have been the same. I didn't even think. I knew it had to be done. It had to be preserved.

At that time I received some help from a foundation and this made it possible for me to write the first book. I was getting along, one foot in front of the other, when all at once the house was to be sold. But you see,



house was saved and it will be the Landowska Center for as long as I can keep it.

HANEY: *You have a remarkable inner energy.*

DENISE RESTOUT: Compared to Landowska it is nothing. If I have any strength it comes from the conviction I have. I believe in what I am doing and I believe each of us has something to do in this world and if we are lucky enough to know what we are to do we should do it.

HANEY: *While you knew it must come some day, I'm sure you were not prepared for Landowska's death.*

DENISE RESTOUT: No. One is never prepared. I must say something about this. It was horrible in one way because when you are so close to someone for so long and you have such reverence for the person it is horrible to see that life go. But at the same time it is a tremendous experience. The other lady who lived here with us at the time also spent much time with Landowska but I was alone with Landowska at the very moment she died. It is something so simple. One begins to realize how natural it is. Of course you are torn apart at the same time.

Even during this sorrow another problem arose which had to be solved. Although Landowska was a Catholic she was not practicing because of her demanding schedules, travels and many other things, but she was a very religious person. When her brother died she had a Catholic funeral for him. She had not told me what she wanted to be done when her time came, except one thing. She wanted to be cremated and that her ashes be deposited at the same place where her brother is buried in France.

Immediately after she died I called a priest because I thought that would be what she wanted since that is what she did with her beloved brother. I then learned that at that time the Catholic church did not permit cremation and since she had wanted to be cremated that created a problem. The priest told me we could not have a service in the church because of that.

I asked that she stay here in her home. We took this couch out and her casket was placed right here where I am sitting. We later took her to New Haven for the cremation, but for a whole day and a whole night she was here. During the day people came to pay their respects to this great human being who had devoted her entire life to music. But during the night everyone was gone and I stayed alone, all night with her. It was the most beautiful experience I have ever had in my life. The perfect quiet. I think I had received from her at that time almost as much as all the rest of the life she shared with me. It was beautiful.

Years later when Father Forte

came to Lakeville which was only a few years ago, I told him about all this and he understood. I had him read some of her early writings as a young girl and he could feel what kind of a person she was and that she was a religious person. He said "We must do something . . . I will say a Mass for her here in this room." And he did. It was beautiful.

Her ashes were taken back to France and are in a beautiful garden where we used to take walks. My father designed the grave and there is a bench where one may rest and meditate and enjoy the beautiful view.

Her ashes are there, but I believe she is here in this house, and very much alive. ☺

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